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[a zine about schenley park, found sometime in autumn of 2014]

Ritual

Welcome to the dawn of the New Dark Ages. Stale recitations of cliché make you cringe, of course, but what other way is there to put it? Eyes roll in pompous recognition or glaze over in willful ignorance, an enunciation of a look that felt so different when you were high. Reading attempts to mirror a collapse that for some reason cannot make itself felt, for those that already know are insulted by your platitudes, and those that don't bounce every scary idea right off their disinterest. Between complicity and action, thought and deed, lays the divorce that tore at your innards as a child in elementary school. The collapse intensifies with every meme. Lines your writing and laces your Molly.

Frazier Street

There has never been a good view of the sunrise on our porch. Each morning we chain-smoke and scour an adulterated horizon, peering between hazy silhouettes of skyscrapers that serve no purpose but to obstruct the coming day, and each morning we cough up the same feigned disappointments for the sake of conversation. We all know what the sunrise looks like from our porch. The six of us have lived here for years now. But each morning the flick of a lighter facilitates mumbled diatribes rehashed from a thousand similar conversations, each lasting no longer than a cigarette and a half. You've heard it all before.

Today, Western Imperialism is the imperialism of the relative, of the "It all depends on your point of view"; it's the eye rolling or the wounded indignation at anyone who is stupid, primitive, or presumptuous enough to believe in something, to affirm anything at all.

– The Coming Insurrection

On Heartbreak

I have trouble understanding how such powerful things can be whispered into eager and receptive ears, and then forgotten forever.

BENEFITS

• #1 consumer brar
the United States²

• Sweetened with pure

lattes, iced coffee,

Do not

Street P

s 101 – SubMedia.TV

The Occupation of Wheeler Hall – GlobalU

year ago when she strolled down 376, hand in hand with a stranger, the first highway blockade in Pittsburgh's accessible memory. She had lost herself in the music of the city then just as she had now, arms thrashing wildly to properly conduct her ensemble, dilated eyes taking in her manic reflection as it repeated a thousand times over in the windows of the adjacent high-rises.

John desperately wanted to share her sudden passion, to call on her friends to share the stage and bask together in the glory of *Life, The Musical*. But she was afraid of scaring them off; of alienating them any more than she was *certain* they already were; of being accused of speaking on their behalf.

The crisp autumn winds brushed John's hair and flipped her tie so that it wrapped halfway around her neck, suspending it in the air immediately behind her. John shut her stinging eyes and loosened her tie slightly. She had given up conducting. Instead, she spread her arms as one would emulate a crucifix, palms facing outward. She let the wind continue caressing her wrinkled suit and whisper strange things in her ears. In the winds she heard the voices of countless thousands all around the city. They told her their hopes and dreams, their worries and pains, their triumphs and sins, and she knew them. Far, far behind her lay her own perceptions of such abstractions, scattered amongst her desk, her dorm room, friends, family, love life...

No, she did not leap. Not this time, at least.

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QUESTIONS ACTING LIKE WEEDS,

Recycle the intellectual inheritance of the past five decades and cling to it like your favorite cheap smog clings to your tastefully thrifted clothing. You're different, of course. The death of the American subculture is not yet fully realized.

Remember those fucking creepy thoughts that kept recurring the night you dropped acid in Schenley? That glimpse of a subtle depth you had never noticed before, present in every interaction, the genuine repurposing of words? *Those self-righteous bastards... rhyming their banal, pill-soaked musings, stumbling in hate-bound blackouts, personifying the moral ambiguity that shrouds the culture that birthed them. Why were they just now telling you all this?*

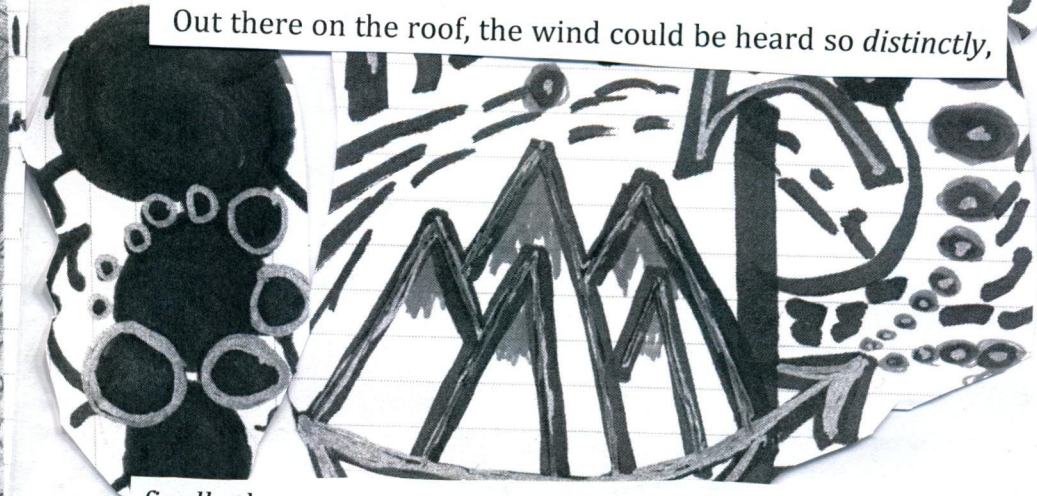
Puddles of crumbling thought pool and stagnate in the Hollow, but not before catching wind enough to flow proudly with the static that fizzles in glossy eyes across the country. Just another kid with your arm tied off, not from fear or defeat or resignation or escape, but from boredom and privilege, from self-absorption and manic bursts of ego. Kindling for the upheaval to come. Bits of identity and imitation to mix amongst the ashes where you swore you had finally learned how to create space, not take it: The *it* we've been waiting for.

We *are the blank stares and vacant minds fostering a culture of disconnect. We are the alienation you seek to define, to articulate.*

John was back on the rooftop of her dorm. Twenty-six stories down, police sirens joined the traffic ensemble, a musical city's ritualized chorus – the marching band in the Rush Hour Parade, as a Cousin once told her.

John took a step onto the ledge and began conducting, flailing her arms to and fro, a hopeless attempt to direct the sounds of a world that could never be hers. She fantasized letting the wind know which way it should howl.

Out there on the roof, the wind could be heard so *distinctly*,



finally there was space enough for it to perform alongside the sounds of the rest of the city. Excitement began creeping back up John's spine, repossessing her as it had a

BREAKING UP CONCRETE

Has it registered yet? Perhaps an excerpt from a book whose authors have been charged with terrorism:

It's useless to wait-for a breakthrough, for the revolution, the nuclear apocalypse or a social movement. To go on waiting is madness. The catastrophe is not coming, it is here. We are already situated within the collapse of a civilization. It is within this reality that we must choose sides...

The West is a civilization that has survived all the prophecies of its collapse with a singular stratagem. Just as the bourgeoisie had to deny itself as a class in order to permit the bourgeoisification of society as a whole, from the worker to the baron; just as capital had to sacrifice itself as a wage relation in order to impose itself as a social relation—becoming cultural capital and health capital in addition to finance capital; just as Christianity had to sacrifice itself as a religion in order to survive as an affective structure—as a vague injunction to humility, compassion, and weakness; so the West has sacrificed itself as a particular civilization in order to impose itself as a universal culture. ***The operation can be summarized like this: an entity in its death throes sacrifices itself as a*** **content** ***in order to survive as a*** **form...**

The world would not be moving so fast if it didn't have to constantly outrun it's own collapse.

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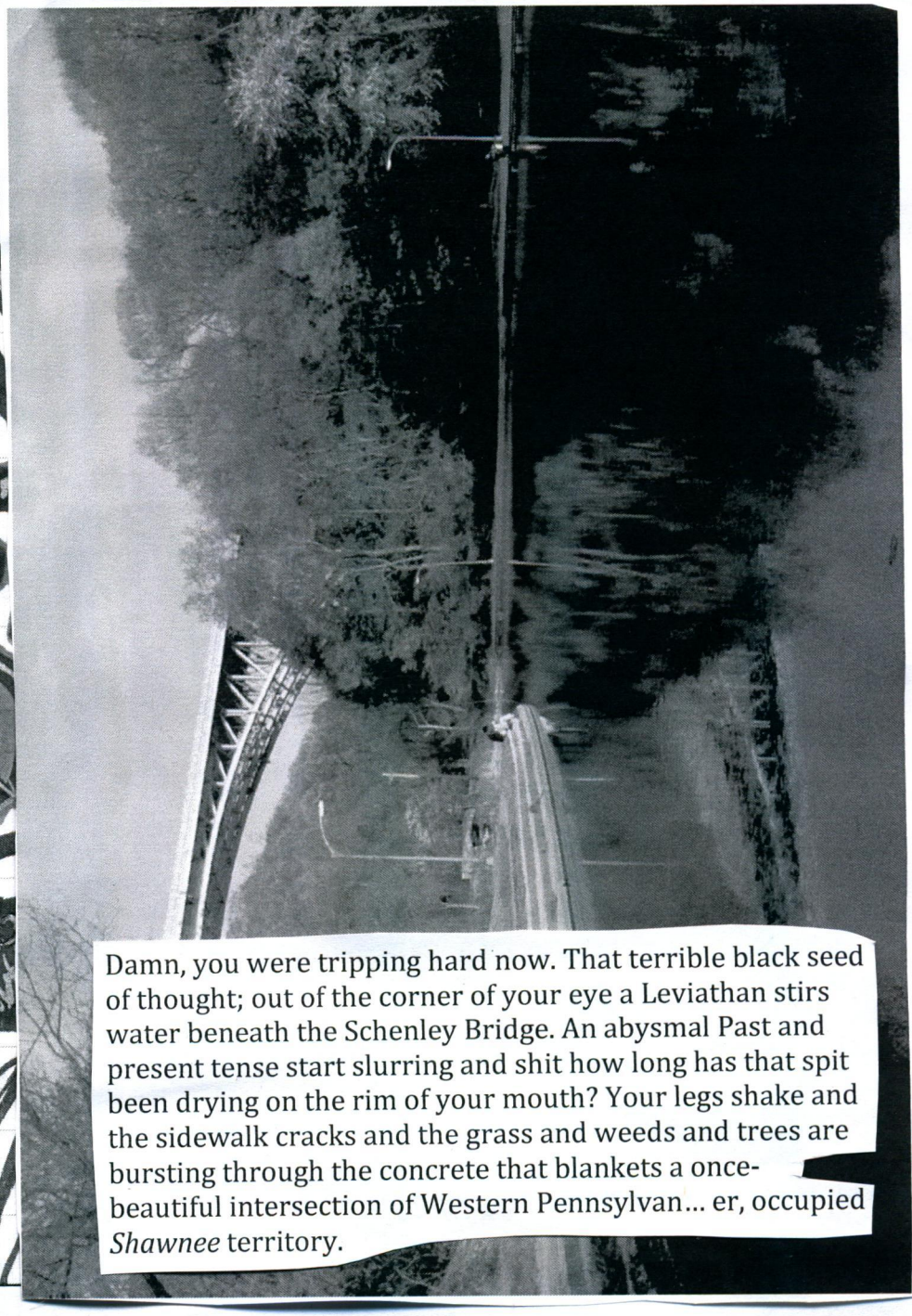


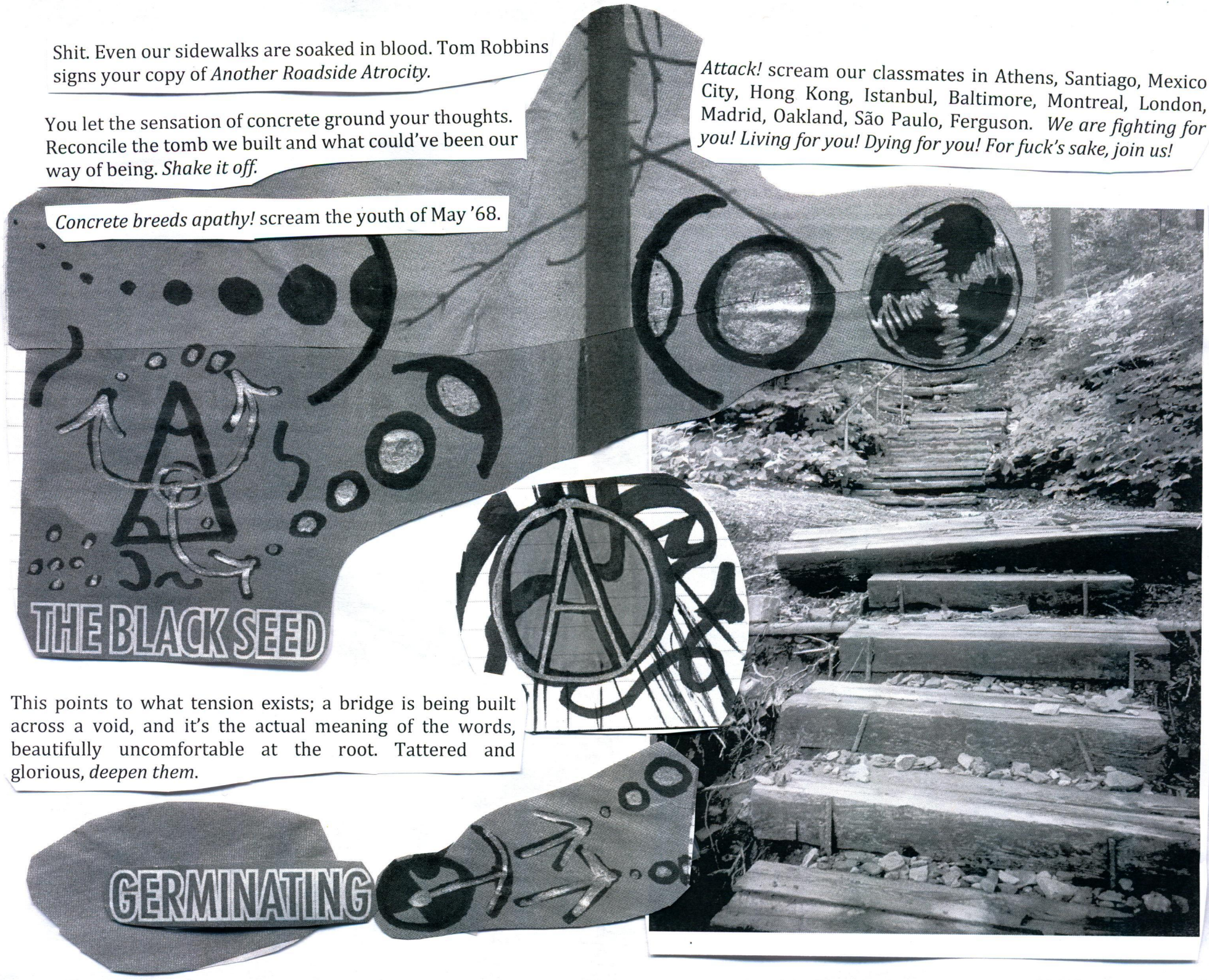
Damn, you were tripping hard now. That terrible black seed of thought; out of the corner of your eye a Leviathan stirs water beneath the Schenley Bridge. An abysmal Past and present tense start slurring and shit how long has that spit been drying on the rim of your mouth? Your legs shake and the sidewalk cracks and the grass and weeds and trees are bursting through the concrete that blankets a once-beautiful intersection of Western Pennsylvan... er, occupied *Shawnee* territory.

Shit. Even our sidewalks are soaked in blood. Tom Robbins signs your copy of *Another Roadside Atrocity.*

You let the sensation of concrete ground your thoughts. Reconcile the tomb we built and what could've been our way of being. *Shake it off.*

Concrete breeds apathy! scream the youth of May '68.

Attack! scream our classmates in Athens, Santiago, Mexico City, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Baltimore, Montreal, London, Madrid, Oakland, São Paulo, Ferguson. *We are fighting for you! Living for you! Dying for you! For fuck's sake, join us!*



This points to what tension exists; a bridge is being built across a void, and it's the actual meaning of the words, beautifully uncomfortable at the root. Tattered and glorious, *deepen them.*